

# THE PARISH MESSENGER

News of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America

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No. 1

## The Triumph of Love

An Easter Message by Dr. R. Marteinsson

*"Love's redeeming work is done  
Fought the fight, the battle won."*

Easter rejoicing is triumphant love. It was love that brought the Son of God to earth, for "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to be the propitiation for sin" and the Saviour of mankind. This divine mission was inspired by and perfected through divine love in the person of Jesus Christ, without a single shadow resting upon that love.

All his work had the evidence of that power. What He did for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the outcast; what He did for the multitude that "heard Him gladly," for His disciples, for His mother; what He did for those who tortured Him, all show an outpouring of love. His teaching and His miracles are consecrated to love. See Him wash His disciples' feet, listen to His prayer in Gethsemane, hear those inimitable words on the cross, and you will be moved by His love.

He died for the sins of mankind. Through His never-failing love, He became the Saviour of the World. He overcame the world in His suffering and death. If, however, there had been no Easter, we might never have understood His work of redemption. He won His triumph on the cross, but we comprehend that power of love, in the illuminating glory of the resurrection.

When we think of that all-conquering power, we are reminded of the words of Jesus, while He was teaching: "Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John. 10: 17, 18).

"Strong was His keeping in the sepulchre; Jesus was stronger."

*"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;  
Christ hath burst the gates of Hell!  
Death in vain forbids Him rise;  
Christ hath opened Paradise."*

Christ is risen from the dead!

His work is complete and without a blemish.

This is humanity's greatest triumph.

There is something tenderly beautiful about that small group of women that came to the sepulchre on early Easter morning to perform the last rites connected with the burial of Jesus. It was love that prompted what they did. They were rewarded by the resurrection message of the angel in the tomb, and by being the first to see the risen Saviour. They were also the first to convey the resurrection news, first Christian missionaries.

Before the Easter miracle "I stand in silence and adore", and say with the apostle Thomas: "My Lord and my God". R. MARTEINSSON

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Evangelical Lutheran Synod of  
America.

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The Rev. ERIC H. SIGMAR, Editor.  
Glenboro, Manitoba.

### EDITORIAL

## Growing . . .

Gradually our sense of stewardship in the wider areas of our Church's work is growing in our synod. We have been good stewards in supporting the work of our Church in our local congregations, but Christian stewardship extends beyond the confines of our local churches and our synod. A true Christian steward is one who realizes that he must help to do the work of God's Church everywhere; that he must cheerfully support the wider causes of our Church. He must hear and respond to the challenge of our Lord, "Go ye into all the world . . ."

Our Lutheran Church has two major "causes" that extend beyond the work of our local congregations. The first is what we refer to as the "Missions and Benevolence Fund". Sometimes we refer to this as "apportionment", because every congregation in our synod and in all the synods of the United Lutheran Church are "apportioned" what is a fair share of their expected giving to this cause. Giving to the "Missions" fund is our answer to our Lord's challenge, "Go ye . . ." It is our share in helping to build new missions of His Church everywhere—in our own land ("Home missions"), and other countries ("Foreign missions"). The second major cause of our Church is "Lutheran World Action". This is our response to Jesus' words, "Feed my sheep . . ." "help the broken hearted". Thousands of our Lutheran brethren in

Europe and Asia are "refugees". Thousands are without homes and without hope. L.W.A. has already helped many become "resettled". *Thousands* are still without homes, —and hope. We must continue to help through Lutheran World Action, which is "Love's Willing Answer" to the pitiful and crying needs of our own people.

Many of our congregations have responded to these causes of our work. But many have been making very little response to these important aspects of our Christian stewardship. In a sense it is unfair to the congregations who are doing their share in giving to these causes, for the others not to respond in like manner. Because it gives an unfair picture of our stewardship in these fields of our work. Please notice the chart in another section of this paper. They both show that our Icelandic synod is at the *bottom* of the list of the synods of the ULCA in percentage giving to the "Missions and Benevolence fund".

Let us change this picture. In the name of our loving and compassionate Christ let us take these causes really to heart. Cheerfully and generously, as our Lord has blessed us, let us give from our hearts to these causes. Let us become true stewards of *all* His work. This is the Lord's work; it is also *our* work. "Herein is our Father glorified, that we bear much fruit".

## Thank You!

Here's a "thank you" message from Lutheran World Action headquarters (National Lutheran Council) to all who helped in 1950:

"Be it Resolved:

That the National Lutheran Council instruct its L.W.A. office to make all possible efforts to convey to individual congregations the hearty thanks of all recipients of the blessings made available by L.W.A. and the thanks of the Council for the

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## **New Life In Lundar Parish**

Everyone rejoiced in the Icelandic Synod last summer when the Rev. Johann Fredriksson returned to serve in one of the fields of our synod. He was again received on the Ministerial Roll of synod at its convention in Arborg, after an absence of a number of years.

After supplying the Churchbridge, Sask., parish during the summer months, Pastor Fredriksson accepted a call from the Lundar Parish last September, to serve eight months of the year at a salary of \$150.00 per month and parsonage. Already his call has been extended to ten months, and the salary has been considerably increased. Pastor Fredriksson reports that the parsonage has been renovated extensively.

Enthusiastic reports have come from many sources concerning the fine work which the pastor is doing in Lundar Parish. The people are rallying behind the pastor and the church activity continues to grow in Lundar. Pastor Fredriksson reports that "we are still in the preliminary stages of re-organizing; but the community wants an active church, and we are working towards that end." He goes on to say "the whole parish has awakened to see their need of a well-organized and active church. Our aim is to build up a church that will be self-supporting, serve the whole community, and branch out into mission work at home and abroad."

To get an accurate picture of the field, Pastor Fredriksson assisted by lay-leaders went out and visited almost every home and individual in the community. They gathered information in regards to present membership, and people's attitudes towards the church and its work. Old church records showed a baptized membership of 272, and a confirmed membership of 142. The results of the recent survey and community visitation revealed that there were over 300 adults, some

members, willing to give the church and its work their full interest and support. With this gratifying report from the survey, all indications point to a growing and healthy congregation in Lundar. Pastor Fredriksson reports that besides the survey and community visitation, the people were also contacted by letters, in both the English and Icelandic languages, to rally behind the church and its activity. He also reports that an "every member visitation" will be carried on as an on-going program of the church.

Services are well attended at Lundar Church, with English service every Sunday evening. The average attendance is about 80. Icelandic services are held every other Sunday in the afternoon. A Junior Choir of about twenty young people lead in the singing at evening services. This choir is relatively new, and enthusiastically growing.

The Sunday School enrollment is about 100, with an average attendance of 70. Pastor Fredriksson reports that many of the teachers are from last year's confirmation class. He says that altho' they lack experience, they are "sincere, enthusiastic, and have put their heart and soul into the work". "Our former staff offer a valuable guiding hand."

And active and strong organization of the Lundar Church is the Ladies Aid, who as Pastor Fredriksson says, "are always willing, always ready, and always able to help in time of need. They know where the need is, and how and when to help. It is a branch of our church that bears much fruit." The writer of this article remembers the enthusiastic reports which the ladies of his parish brought home with them after attending the convention of the "Lutheran Women's League" in Lundar last October. The Lundar Ladies Aid was host to the convention.  
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## News Flashes from the Parishes . . .

Enrollment in the Selkirk Sunday School continues to climb, with the last report showing the enrollment figure at 170. The "school" is staffed with 14 teachers.

The Annual Betel concert sponsored by First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, was very well attended on the evening of March 1st. The program consisted of remarks by Pastor Eylands, vocal quartette with Mrs. Pearl Johnson, Miss Lilia Eylands, Albert Halldorson, and Al Blondal; violin solo by Mrs. Ada Hart; Recitation by Miss L. Eylands, Report from "Betel", by J. J. Swanson; Vocal solo by Al Blondal, moving pictures by Dr. L. Sigurdson; and accompanists, Mrs. E. Isfeld, and Miss Sigrid Bardal. An offering of over \$200.00 was received for the "home". Following the program refreshments were served.

Gimli parish has very recently purchased an almost new and modern house for their parsonage. The former parsonage has been sold, and the newer parsonage will be ready for occupancy when Pastor and Mrs. H. S. Sigmar and family arrive from Seattle in mid-April.

The financial report submitted by Treasurer F. A. Josephson at the annual meeting of St. Paul's church, Minneota, showed a balance of \$842. Most of this sum will be used for painting and remodeling the church building this spring. The treasurer's report also revealed that \$361. had been received during 1950 for the Missions and Benevolence fund. The meeting increased the pastors salary \$200.

Calvary Lutheran Church, Seattle, is now sponsoring a series of week-nite lectures on the Far East. Four University of Washington professors have been secured to lecture on the following subjects: Korea, Japan, China, and Russia. To date two lectures have been presented and they have been well attended.

At the annual meetings of Glen-

boro and Baldur congregations of Argyle Parish held in January, it was revealed that both congregations showed favorable financial balances; and that both congregations showed an increase in "Missions" offerings. It was felt that the "Duplex - Envelope System" for church finance was a contributing factor to these favorable reports.

The annual meeting of the Selkirk congregation showed a prosperous year for 1950. Many new members were received during the year; and all financial obligations were met, with the various funds showing a surplus. The eleven member Board of Trustees as elected are the following: J. Peterson, president; J. E. Erickson, secretary; S. A. Goodman, treasurer; B. Kelly, H. Nordal, V. Maxon, Dr. E. Johnson, W. Keen, J. Vogen, H. Hinrikson, and A. Kurbis.

About three hundred children, many accompanied by their parents, assembled in the lower auditorium of First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, for a Sunday School "rally" on the evening of February 2nd. Four films were shown, one a religious film on the first Easter. Refreshments were served. Mrs. Ada Hart, assistant superintendent was in charge of arrangements.

The newly-formed Junior Luther League of St. Paul's church, Minneota, meets on alternate Sunday evenings. Mr. and Mrs. Clair Frakes are in charge of this work. Some of the members are from Vesturheim congregation. The Junior Choir, composed of young people from these two congregations sing at the services of St. Paul's church every second Sunday. Mr. Philip Schneider, music teacher at Minneota High School, trains this choir.

Calvary Lutheran Church, Seattle, dedicated a newly installed electric organ on Sunday, February 4th. The purchase of the new organ was made possible through an "Organ Memorial Fund". Many former

members and friends have been "memorialized" through this fund. Many of the gifts to the fund are given in place of flowers at funerals for members.

A special committee was elected at the annual meeting of Selkirk congregation to augment the building fund as extensive repairs are needed on the church exterior. The committee consists of: Mr. G. Eymann, Mrs. Lillian McKeag, Mr. J. Stefanson, Miss Bjorg Christianson, Mrs. A. Kurbis, Mr. Bill Indridason, and Mrs. W. Keen.

First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, has recently purchased a new parsonage on Banning Street. It is a new and modern house and will be ready for occupancy before long.

Recent "joint" community services held in Glenboro were the Annual Curler's Service, and the Boy Scout and Cub Service. The former was held in the United Church, and the latter in the Lutheran Church. Joint Good Friday services are being arranged between the Lutheran and United Churches in Baldur, and the same for Glenboro.

Many of our Lutheran Congregations of the various synods have been carrying on a system of "Every Member Visitations". First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, is planning such a venture for its congregation in the near future. Fifty volunteers, along with the trustees and deacons will make the visits. All members homes will be visited with the purpose of strengthening the bonds between the Church and the Home. They will stress regular attendance, more loyal stewardship, etc. Prospective members will also be visited. Selkirk congregation is planning a similar membership visitation, with the Deacons there in charge.

St. Paul's congregation recently had a new furnace installed in the parsonage. The Young Ladies Union of the same congregation is buying a complete set of Altar paraments in the prescribed seasonal colors. The Ladies Aid of Lincoln congre-

gation is planning a similar project, for their church.

Arborg parish, which is without pastoral service, has secured the services of Pastor Skuli Sigurgeirson of Foam Lake, for the Easter season.

The dinner meetings of the Men's Club of First Lutheran, Winnipeg, have been well attended this winter. Mr. Skuli Anderson is the president. Ladies Night will be held at the March meeting.

Selkirk Lutheran congregation has the privilege of serving many Lutherans who are non-Icelandic, as many Lutheran families of other nationalities have been moving in to the community recently. Many have already joined the congregation, and others intend to join in the near future.

Student Pastor Stefan Guttormsson has recently received large financial assistance from two of the Ladies Aids of Minneota parish: \$200. from Vesturheim; and \$500. from St. Paul's.

The Young Peoples Associations of Baldur and Glenboro are each planning spring entertainments. In Glenboro a three-act-play will be presented; and in Baldur two one-act plays are being prepared. President of the Baldur group is Miss Ranka Johnson, and Glenboro's president is Miss Lillian Arason.

After a special evening service on January 14th, the members of First Lutheran Church held a reception in honor of Pastor and Mrs. Eylands in commemoration of their 25th Wedding Anniversary. The reception was sponsored by the joint Boards of the Church and the Women's organizations. President Victor Jonasson was master of ceremonies. Beautiful gifts were presented, including a silver tea service. Refreshments were served to the large gathering who were present.

Here's a news item taken from a recent issue of *The Lutheran*, weekly church magazine of the ULCA: "In

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## President Fafnis Visits West Coast Churches

Our four congregations at the West Coast received their first official visit from the President of Synod, when Pastor E. H. Fafnis visited the Pacific Northwest the first week of February.

His first official act was to install the Rev. Dr. H. Sigmar as pastor of Blaine Church, at a special service of installation on February 4th at 11 a.m. It was a festive service, with the church filled to capacity. Pastor Fafnis preached the sermon, and brought the greetings of the synod to the people of the congregation. Following the service a luncheon was served to everyone in the adjacent parish hall. From Blaine Pastor Fafnis went to Vancouver that same afternoon and conducted a service for our Lutheran congregation there. Later that day he visited the Old Folks Home, "Hofn", in Vancouver, and brought greetings to the people of the home.

On Monday evening he travelled to Point Roberts and conducted a rally for Christian Higher Education (CHEY) in Trinity Church. The following day he returned to Blaine where he visited the Old Folks Home, "Stafholt". That evening a rally for "CHEY" was held in the Blaine Church, with the local pastor Dr. Sigmar conducting the rally and President Fafnis presenting the cause. The following day they went again to Vancouver where a well-attended "CHEY" rally was held in the evening in the Danish Church which our congregation there uses for its services and activity.

Thursday found Pastor Fafnis back in Seattle where he had arrived one week previous. There he visited former friends and relatives; and on Friday evening presented the cause of Christian Higher Education to the people of Calvary Church, Seattle. This rally was conducted by the local pastor, Rev. H. S. Sigmar, and was well attended.

Already the fruits of his "CHEY" presentation are evidencing themselves in the gifts coming in for this cause from the people of these congregations.

The president was cordially welcomed and heartily received by our congregations at the West Coast.

## Some Statistics from Our Treasurer's Office

For "CHEY" we have paid out \$1581.50. The result of support received mainly from Minneota Parish, Argyle Parish, and Langruth congregation.

For Lutheran World Action our synod submitted \$1221.80 for 1950. Of this amount over \$700 was submitted in early January, revealing the results of Christmas LWA offerings in our churches.

Three congregations have already paid their apportionment (Missions and Benevolence cause) and synodical dues. They are Vesturheim (Minneota Parish), Bru (Argyle), and Langruth congregations.

Eleven congregations are paid up on synodical dues: Vikur and Vidalins (Mountain parish), Gudbrands (Brown, Man.), Gimli, Mikley, Calvary (Seattle), Grund, Bru, Vesturheims, Langruth, and Logberg (Churchbridge).

Four congregations have paid full support to the "Parish Messenger". They are Immanuel (Baldur), Grund, Bru, and First Lutheran, Winnipeg.

The treasurer would appreciate an early return of funds to our various causes, especially Apportionment (Missions), synod dues, and "Parish Messenger" support, as the books will close for audit on May 30.

N. O. Bardal, *Treas.*  
Icelandic Synod.

The more uncertain and confused men are, the more important it is that the Church speak out clearly and unmistakably.

## "MISSIONS" GIVING FOR 1950

### WHERE DOES OUR SYNOD STAND?

Report on U.L.C.A. Apportionment Receipts for 1950

Rank 1950	100% or more	1949 Paid	1950 Apportionment	1950 Paid	1950 Percent
1	Rocky-Mountain	\$14,644.00	\$15,358.00	\$16,401.25	106.79
2	Northwest	256,939.33	266,108.00	281,812.41	105.90
3	Central Pa.	504,574.18	721,309.00	727,319.83	100.83
4	West Virginia	14,246.23	20,686.00	20,698.83	100.06
5	Pacific	21,730.00	22,465.00	22,476.00	100.05
6	California	57,847.17	66,801.00	66,801.00	100.00
<b>76% to 99%</b>					
7	Georgia-Alabama	18,989.50	21,737.00	21,465.83	98.75
8	North Carolina	120,830.63	147,949.00	142,879.85	96.57
9	Kansas	26,488.06	36,006.00	34,418.38	95.59
10	Ky.-Tenn.	15,450.73	24,579.00	23,384.94	95.14
11	Maryland	137,304.52	217,013.00	203,489.63	93.77
12	Iowa	47,250.00	68,033.00	63,000.00	92.60
13	Ohio	223,698.03	336,590.00	304,810.72	90.56
14	Indiana	54,325.31	86,185.00	77,855.73	90.34
15	Michigan	24,031.65	40,160.00	35,892.42	89.37
16	Florida	11,548.79	12,521.00	11,060.80	88.34
17	South Carolina	65,989.00	107,890.00	94,500.00	87.59
18	Mississippi	1,003.79	1,976.00	1,706.00	86.34
19	Illinois	184,252.82	217,029.00	185,193.60	85.33
20	Virginia	55,463.99	85,404.00	68,824.23	80.59
21	Pittsburg	226,404.25	395,220.00	281,210.85	78.28
<b>51% to 75%</b>					
22	Pa. Ministerium	521,501.99	928,537.00	673,734.14	72.56
23	Texas	14,044.00	26,800.00	19,378.82	72.31
24	New York	382,561.93	596,101.00	411,596.62	69.05
25	Nebraska	36,236.00	73,823.00	49,903.03	67.60
26	Midwest	32,521.00	61,754.00	41,000.00	66.39
27	Nova Scotia	7,251.57	14,051.00	7,607.99	54.15
28	Wartburg	33,225.00	66,169.00	34,087.96	51.52
<b>Below 50%</b>					
29	Canada	36,995.32	103,880.00	42,855.39	41.25
30	Western Canada	5,000.00	42,237.00	12,000.00	28.41
31	Slovak-Zion	6,288.12	33,817.00	5,919.71	17.51
32	ICELANDIC	2,190.00	8,712.00	1,500.00	17.22
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$3,162,776.91</b>	<b>\$4,830,900.00</b>	<b>\$3,986,885.96</b>	<b>82.53</b>

A study of the above chart reveals that unfortunately our Synod is at the bottom of the list of all Synods of the U.L.C.A. in "Missions and Benevolence Fund" giving. It shows that we gave only \$1,500.00 in 1950, or 17 per cent of our "apportionment" or quota. It reveals that we gave less in 1950 than we did in 1949, when we gave \$2,190.00. Let's make it different for 1951! Send in your "Missions and Benevolence" offerings to Treasurer Bardal before May 31st.

### THANK YOU!

(Continued from Page 2)

congregations' consistently generous response to the compassion-motivated calls of Lutheran World Action;

That the National Lutheran Council urgently commend to our pastors and congregations the proposed goal

of \$3,300,000. for 1951, (for all Lutheran groups in North America) including an emergency item to re-activate a spiritual ministry to Lutheran men and women in military service, and to call their attention to the compelling needs which summon them to all-out effort in the coming months."

## Our "Chey" Situation

To date the people of our synod have contributed \$1581.50 to the Christian Higher Education Year appeal of our church. About \$500 more has been pledged, for a total of approximately \$2,000 or about 20 per cent of our "quota" of \$11,500. We are therefore beginning to reach for the goal. Some people of our synod have already contributed generously to this cause, but the majority have not as yet responded.

Remember that this is just a *one year* appeal. It ends in 1951. We will not be called on again for such an appeal for our institutions of higher learning (colleges and seminaries). They usually manage to support themselves; but in the emergency of swelled enrollments, need for repairs on old buildings, and crying need for many new ones, it was necessary to go to the people of our Church for help. Our Church has 23 schools of higher learning, 14 colleges, and 9 seminaries. They are all good schools. They are training *Christian* leaders for tomorrow. Our countries sorely need young men and women of Christian conviction and ideals. Any help that we make towards this appeal is our part in making a better nation and a better world—for ourselves and for our children. Christian Education is the basis and foundation of Christianity. It must not perish!

"CHEY" means "Christian Higher Education Year". Let us do our part in making that year's appeal a success. All but four of the synods of the ULCA have met their goal in full, or more; some much more. In our synod we are making the "drive" on an individual basis instead of a congregational basis. You may remit your gifts to "CHEY" either to your congregational treasurer, or to Mr. N. O. Bardal, synodical treasurer, 843 Sherbrook St., Winnipeg. Today's tensions call for greater strength. We can help.

## NEWS FLASHES FROM THE PARISHES

(Continued from Page 5)

Pueblo, Colorado, the Rev. Bjarni A. Bjarnason is developing a very promising field. The difficulty is finding a place to worship. It may be necessary to purchase a residence and convert it to chapel purposes."

The Senior Luther League of Calvary Church, Seattle, has been having an active season. Their most recent project was the purchase of a 16mm sound-film projector, which is now paid in full. Recently a Junior Luther League was organized at Calvary.

On the evening of January 22nd, the Seminary Choir of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., sang a sacred concert in First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg. The concert was well attended.

At its annual meeting in January, Calvary church voted to enroll in the Pastors' Contributory Pension Plan, and the Family Protection Plan. These "plans" are pension and insurance benefits offered by the ULCA's Board of Pensions to its congregations and ministers.

## NEW LIFE IN LUNDAR PARISH

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tion, and revealed their strength and activity in this undertaking.

In speaking of the work as a whole in Lundar parish, Pastor Fredriksson says, "we lay much stress on visitation, and devotions in the home. This moment of quiet meditation creates results that will be the driving power to lift us up to where we should stand."

Yes, the synod rejoices in Pastor Fredriksson's return to our work. And we rejoice in the growing activity which he and his people are manifesting in Lundar. May God continue to bless their work, that it may grow and develop, and abound to His glory.

E.H.S.